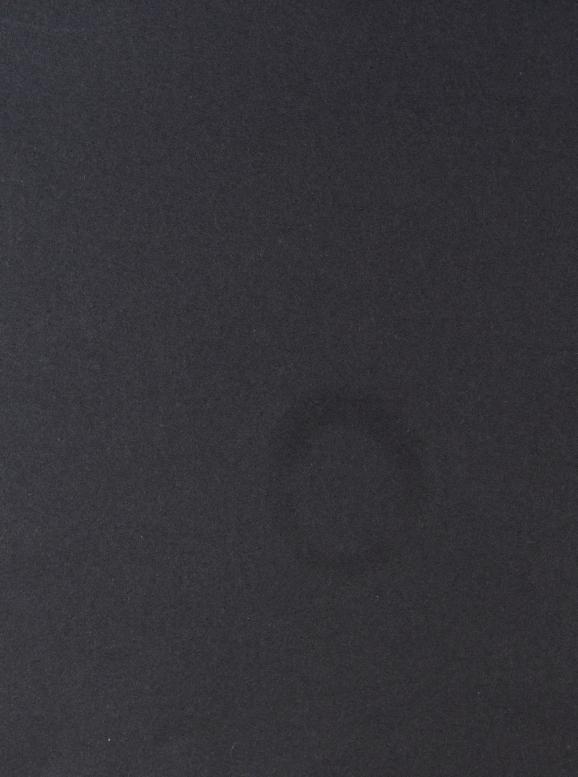CANADIAN MULTICLTURALISM

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Marc Leman
Political and Social Affairs Division

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CANADIAN MULTICULTURALISM*

ISSUE DEFINITION

The concept of Canada as a "multicultural society" can be interpreted in different ways: descriptively (as a sociological fact), prescriptively (as ideology), from a political perspective (as policy), or as a set of intergroup dynamics (as process).

As fact, "multiculturalism" in Canada refers to the presence and persistence of diverse racial and ethnic minorities who define themselves as different and who wish to remain so. Ideologically, multiculturalism consists of a relatively coherent set of ideas and ideals pertaining to the celebration of Canada's cultural mosaic. Multiculturalism at the policy level is structured around the management of diversity through formal initiatives in the federal, provincial and municipal domains. Finally, multiculturalism is the process by which racial and ethnic minorities compete with central authorities for achievement of certain goals and aspirations.

The focus of this study will be an analysis of Canadian multiculturalism both as a demographic reality and as a public policy.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

A. Multiculturalism as a Sociological Fact of Canada Life

Canada can be described as a multicultural society whose racial and ethnic diversity is expressed in different ways. In recent years, a vigorous immigration policy has attracted a growing number of applicants from non-traditional sources such as Asia, Africa, Central America, and the Caribbean. Current levels in immigration totals suggest that our multicultural diversity will continue to flourish in some form into the twenty-first century. It is noteworthy that much of this

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*   The original version of this Current Issue Review was published in January 1994. This paper replaces an earlier text with the same title.

diversity is concentrated in Ontario, particularly in the metropolitan region of Toronto, as well as in the metropolitan areas of Vancouver and Montreal.

Demographically, some analysts suggest that Canadian society be divided into three major "forces." The first force consists of aboriginal peoples and includes status Indians, non-status Indians, Métis and Inuit. The *Constitution Act* of 1982 defined all natives as aboriginal peoples. In 1991, a total of 1,002,675 persons reported their origin as aboriginal or part aboriginal, representing about 3.7% of the total population. The second force consists of the colonizing groups who eventually defined themselves as the founding members of Canadian society. Known as the Charter groups, both the French- and English-speaking communities constitute this force. The third force in Canadian society comprises those racial and ethnic minorities who fall outside the Charter groups. They consist of those native and foreign-born Canadians with some non-French and non-British ancestry.

Members of Canada's three major forces entered this country in trickles and droves over the years, beginning with the arrival of the ancestors of native Indians from Asia, followed thousands of years later by the French and the British colonizers, who appointed themselves the official founders of Canada. At the turn of this century, the gates opened to allow other Europeans and Asians into Canada, although not without hostility from a substantial portion of the public. In recent years, the number of immigrants into Canada, although significant, has not matched that of the peak periods before the First World War and after the Second World War. Patterns of immigration have also shifted toward non-conventional sources such as Asia, the Caribbean, and South and Central America. Equally significant has been the unprecedented influx of landed refugees--many of them from Third World countries-- who have requested entry into Canada.

Canada's cultural diversity is manifest at the level of ethnic and immigrant composition. At the time of Confederation, Canada's population was chiefly British, (60%) and French (30%). By 1981, the combination of declining fertility and infusion of non-European immigrants saw the British and French total decline to 40% and 27%, respectively. The 1991 figures are even more revealing, although the decline in British-only and French-only categories may partly reflect the inclusion of questions on multiple origins in the census forms. Of Canada's total population of 26,994,045, more than 11 million (11,252,335) or 41.7% reported having some non-British or non-French ethnic origins. By way of contrast, the proportion of those with British-only ancestry declined (to 28.6%, down from 33.6% in 1986), as did the French-only category

(22.9%, down from 24.4% in 1986). Those reporting both British and French backgrounds totalled 4%.

Language diversity is also at the core of Canadian pluralism. According to the 1991 census, English dominates as the first language (mother tongue) in 60.6% of the population, French comes next at 23.8%, while the other category has 13%. When people with more than one mother tongue are included, these proportions stood respectively at 62.9%, 24.9% and 14.9% respectively. The degree of diversity is somewhat diminished with regard to the language that is used at home. Census figures point out to the predominance of English in the homes of 68.5%, compared with French at 23.5%, and "other" at 8%. With respect to the other "heritage" languages, census statistics reveal that Italian and German are the most frequently reported known non-official languages, with approximately 700,000 speakers each. Next come the more that 550,000 Chinese speakers, more than 400,000 Spanish speakers, and more than 250,000 Portuguese speakers. When home languages are taken into account, the order is Chinese, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish and German. The fact speak for themselves: Canada is a multilingual society at the level of empirical reality.

B. Multiculturalism as a Public Policy at the Federal Level

Analysts generally agree that the nature and characteristics of federal multiculturalism have evolved through three developmental phases: incipient (pre-1971), format.ve (1971-1981), and expansionist (1982 to the present).

1. The Incipient Stage: pre-1971

The era preceding 1971 can best be interpreted as a time of gradual movement toward acceptance of ethnic diversity as legitimate and integral to Canadian society. Nation-building in the symbolic and cultural sense was oriented toward the replication of a British type of society in Canada. This was reflected in the cultural dimension of Canada's political, economic and social institutions. All Canadians were defined as British subjects until the passage of the *Canadian Citizenship Act* in 1947 and a variety of cultural symbols legitimized the British underpinnings of English-speaking Canada. For the most part, central authorities dismissed the value of cultural heterogeneity, considering racial and ethnic differences as inimical to national

4

interests and detrimental to our character and integrity. Only the massive influx of post-Second World War immigrants from Europe prompted central authorities to rethink the role and status of "other ethnics" within the evolving dynamic of Canadian society.

Events and developments during the 1960s paved the way for the eventual demise of assimilation as government policy and the subsequent appearance of multiculturalism. Pressures for change stemmed from the growing assertiveness of Canada's aboriginal peoples, the force of Québécois nationalism, and the increased resentment of ethnic minorities towards their place in society.

2. The Formative Period (1971-1981)

Book Four of the report of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism (B&B) dealt with the contribution of other ethnic groups to the cultural enrichment of Canada and recommended the "integration" (not assimilation) into Canadian society of non-Charter ethnic groups with full citizenship rights and equal participation in Canada's institutional structure. The recommendations of the Commission hastened the introduction of an innovative ethnocultural policy. The key objectives of the policy announced in October 1971 and elaborated upon over the years, were:

- To assist cultural groups to retain and foster their identity;

- To assist cultural groups to overcome barriers to their full participation in Canadian society; (Thus, the multiculturalism policy advocated the full involvement and equal participation of ethnic minorities in mainstream institutions, without denying them the right to identify with select elements of their cultural past if they so chose.)

- To promote creative exchanges among all Canadian cultural groups;

- To assist immigrants in acquiring at least one of the official languages.

Implementation of these policy objectives depended on government funding. Nearly $200 million was set aside in the first decade of the policy for special initiatives in language and cultural maintenance. A multicultural Directorate within the Department of Secretary of State was approved in 1972 to assist in the implementation of multicultural policies and programs. The

Directorate-sponsored activities aimed at assisting ethnic minorities in the areas of human rights, freedom from racial discrimination, citizenship, immigration and cultural diversity. A ministry of Multiculturalism was created in 1973 to monitor the implementation of multicultural initiatives within government departments. In addition, formal linkages between the government and ethnic organizations were established to provide permanent input into the decision-making process. An example was the Canadian Consultative Council on Multiculturalism, established in 1973 and later renamed the Canadian Ethnocultural Council.

The architects of the 1971 policy had perceived barriers to social adaptation and economic success largely in linguistic or cultural terms. The marked increase in the flow of visible minority immigrants whose main concerns were employment, housing, education and fighting discrimination required a shift in policy thinking. Equality through the removal of racially discriminatory barriers became the main focus of multicultural programs and race relations policies and programs were put in place to discover, isolate and combat racial discrimination at personal and institutional levels. A strong emphasis was put on encouraging and facilitating the ways in which cultural minority groups can fully participate in Canadian society.

3. The Expansionist Phase (1982 - present)

The 1980; witnessed a growing institutionalization of multicultural policy. Shifts in this policy coincided with a period of difficulties for race relations in Canada. In large cities, immigration had, over a shot period of time, noticeably changed the composition of the population. Canada also began witnessing the emergence of a few individuals and groups promoting racist ideas. The government first concentrated on promoting institutional change in order to help Canadian institutions adapt to the presence of the new immigrant groups. Another shift was the introduction of anti-discrimination programs designed to help remove social and cultural barriers separating minority and majority groups in Canada.

In 1982 multiculturalism was referred to in the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.

6

Section 27 of the Charter states:

> This Charter shall be interpreted in a manner consistent with the preservation and enhancement of the multicultural heritage of Canadians.

This clause is critical in locating multiculturalism within the wider framework of Canadian society. The clause empowers the courts to take Canada's multicultural reality into account at the highest levels of decision-making. In the words of a former Human Rights Commissioner it provides a useful "interpretative prism" to assist the courts when balancing individual and multicultural (and often collective) rights. In appropriate cases, section 27 provides the means whereby guarantees of individual rights and freedoms are interpreted in a manner consistent with the preservation and enhancement of Canadian multiculturalism. A relevant example is the issue of freedom of individual expression as this conflicts with the prohibition against racial slurs or circulation of racially-based hate propaganda. Hence, the principle underlying the freedom of individual expression does not extend to absolute free speech.

Moreover, the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* addresses the elimination of expressions of discrimination by guaranteeing both equality and fairness to all under the law, regardless of race or ethnicity. Section 15 (1) states:

> Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age, or mental or physical disability.

In addition, sub-section 15(2) establishes entitlement to non-discriminatory benefits without denying the need for additional measures to assist disadvantaged sectors.

In 1984, the Special Parliamentary Committee on Visible Minorities produced its well-known report *Equality Now!*, and in 1985 a House of Commons Standing Committee on Multiculturalism was created. The Committee, in an extensive report in 1987, called for the enactment of a new policy on multiculturalism and the creation of the Department of Multiculturalism.

A new multiculturalism policy with a clearer sense of purpose and direction came into effect in July 1988 when the *Multiculturalism Act* was adopted by Parliament. Canada was the

7

first country in the world to pass a national multiculturalism law. The Act acknowledged multiculturalism as a fundamental characteristic of Canadian society with an integral role in the decision-making process of the federal government. Directed toward the preservation and enhancement of multiculturalism in Canada, the *Multiculturalism Act* sought to assist in the preservation of culture and language, to reduce discrimination, to enhance cultural awareness and understanding, and to promote culturally sensitive institutional change at the federal level.

In seeking a balance between cultural distinctiveness and equality, the Act specified the right of all to identify with the cultural heritage of their choice, yet retain "full and equitable participation...in all aspects of Canadian society." In effect, the Act sought to preserve, enhance and incorporate cultural difference into the functioning of Canadian society, while ensuring equal access and full participation for all Canadians in the social, political, and economic spheres. It also focused on the eradication of racism and removal of discriminatory barriers as being incompatible with Canada's commitment to human rights.

Moreover, multiculturalism serves as a positive instrument of change aimed at the removal of barriers that preclude the involvement, equity, access, and representation of all citizens in Canada's institutions. The Act recognizes the need to increase minority participation in Canada's major institutions by bringing diversity into these institutions as a natural, normal, and positive component of decision-making, resource allocation, and the setting of priorities. All government agencies, departments and Crown corporations--not just the ministry responsible for multiculturalism-- are currently expected to provide leadership in advancing Canada's multicultural mix and to take part in the design and implementation of plans, programs, procedures and decision-making strategies that enhance the full and equal participation of minorities within institutional structures. The Act also sets out the obligation to combat racism and unfair discriminatory practices proactively, especially where such practices are perpetuated by systemic bias.

Legislation creating a full-fledged Department of Multiculturalism and Citizenship was introduced in Parliament in the fall of 1989 and adopted in its final form in early 1991. The institutionalized programs established under the newly created Department were:

- Race Relations and Cross-Cultural Understanding "to promote among Canadian and in Canadian institutions appreciation, acceptance and implementation of the principles of racial equality and multiculturalism;"

- Heritage Cultures and Languages "to assist Canadians to preserve, enhance and share their cultures, languages and ethnocultural group identities;

- Community Support and Participation "to support the full and equitable participation in Canadian life of individuals and communities from Canada's racial and ethnocultural minorities."

Where early multicultural policies concentrated on cultural preservation and intercultural sharing through promotion of ethnic presses and festivals, current emphasis is firmly on race relations and the attainment of social and economic integration through removal of discriminating barriers, institutional change, and affirmative action to equalize opportunity. Multicultural spending since the early 1990s clearly reflects this new focus. For example, of the total amount allocated for the three major multiculturalism programs, over half has been slated for the Community Support and Participation program, and the remaining 22% flowed into the various activities of the Heritage Languages and Cultures program. In comparison, in the early 1980s, funds were divided equally between community participation and heritage cultures. No funds were allocated for race relations.

With the advent of the new department, government discourse on multiculturalism became couched increasingly in terms of citizenship. When he appeared before the Senate Standing Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology, which was conducting a study on the concept, development and promotion of Canadian citizenship, Mr. Gerry Weiner, the minister responsible for the newly established department, interrelated the two components of citizenship and multiculturalism. In his words, "the exercise of citizenship rests on two principles: equality and participation. Without equality, full participation in the life of Canada is impossible. Multiculturalism is one of the tools to help us achieve equality and full participation." Attention is now focused on: what it means to be a Canadian citizen; the rights, duties and obligations of citizenship in a multicultural society; and the necessity to highlight ethnocultural differences and human rights as essential ingredients of Canadian citizenship. This, in turn, reflected government

9

promotion of multiculturalism as applicable to all Canadians, not something outside the mainstream and for minorities only.

The new Department, however, was shortlived. In the fall of 1993 it was dismantled and the multiculturalism programs were integrated into the new and larger Canadian Heritage Department, which also combined responsibility for official languages, arts and culture, broadcasting, national parks and historic sites, voluntary action, human rights, amateur sports, State Ceremonial and the National Capital Commission. Moreover, a Secretary of State of Multiculturalism was appointed within the portfolio of the Minister of Canadian Heritage. The citizenship activity (citizenship registration and promotion) was amalgamated in the newly established Department of Citizenship and Immigration.

Following increased criticisms of the multiculturalism program voiced by various groups and individuals from different venues in Canadian society, the Department launched a comprehensive review of its multiculturalism programming activities in 1995. At the end of October 1996, Secretary of State for Multiculturalism Hedy Fry announced a renewed program which will be focused on the three objectives of social justice: building a fair and equitable society, civic participation (ensuring that Canadians of all origins participate in the shaping of our communities and country), and identity (fostering a society that recognizes multiculturalism as a fundamental characteristic of Canada). The renewed program will stress building more partnerships with ethnocultural organizations, social agencies, community groups, governments and the private sector. It will also adopt a more strategic approach to working with federal departments and agencies on issues related to multiculturalism. Prime examples of such issues in our communities are initiatives that address hate crimes, culturally-sensitive health care, accessibility to social services for first-generation Canadians, and the development of international trade markets.

At the same time, the Secretary of State announced the official establishment of the Canadian Race Relations Foundation, whose mandate includes undertaking research, collecting data, and developing a national information base to further understanding of racism and racial discrimination; providing information to support effective race relations

training and the development of professional standards; and disseminating of information to increase public awareness of the importance of eliminating racism. The Foundation, whose headquarters will be in Toronto, will be governed by a board consisting of a Chairperson, 15 directors appointed for a term of up to three years, and a full-time executive director. It will be initially funded by a one-time endowment of $24 million from the federal government and will operate thereafter on income derived from investments, donations and fundraising. Mr. Lincoln M. Alexander, former Lieutenant-governor of Ontario, was appointed the first Chair of the Foundation.

C. Attitudes to Multiculturalism

Various publications and polls suggest that Canadians are generally supportive of a multicultural society, at least in principle if not always in practice. The 1991 Angus Reid survey of Canadian attitudes to ethnic issues and citizenship remains the most comprehensive available. It reported that 78% of respondents believed that multiculturalism policy would enrich Canadian culture and that roughly two-thirds of respondents thought that a society with more ethnic groups would be more able to tackle new problems as they arose. The survey also showed that 89% of respondents supported programs to eliminate racial discrimination through public education and 85% supported the idea of helping recent Canadian citizens acquire the skills and knowledge necessary for integration into Canadian society. Another 90% supported introduction of activities to ensure all Canadians, regardless of ethnic or racial background, equal access to jobs.

Yet many Canadians are unsure of what multiculturalism is, what it is trying to do and why, and what it can realistically accomplish in a liberal-democratic society such as ours. Multiculturalism can encompass folk songs, dance, food festivals, arts and crafts, museums, heritage languages, ethnic studies, ethnic presses, race relations, culture sharing and human rights. Much of the confusion results from the indiscriminate application of the term to a wide range of situations, practices, expectations, and goals.

Attitudes toward multiculturalism are known to vary according to region, ethnicity, educational level, and age. Support is strongest among youth and people with a high school education or higher. Residents of urban Ontario appear receptive to the concept, while Quebeckers, aboriginal peoples and western Canadians have demonstrated less enthusiasm. Much of the ambivalence toward multiculturalism is derived from its institutionalization as state policy, rather than disagreement over principles. It also reflects confusion in distinguishing between what multiculturalism is and what it should be, and between what it is trying to do and how it hopes to accomplish its goals.

Quebeckers' uneasiness about, or even resistance to, federal multiculturalism policy is largely explained in terms of their perception of it as another intrusion by central authorities into their province's internal affairs. Many are inclined to view it as a ploy to downgrade the distinct society status of the Quebeckers to the level of an ethnic minority culture under the domination of English-speaking Canada. Multiculturalism is thus seen as an attempt to dilute the French fact in Canada, weakening francophone status and threatening the dual partnership of English-speaking and French-speaking Canadians. For many Quebeckers, the idea of reducing the rights of French-speaking Canadians to the same level as those of other ethno-racial minorities in the name of multicultural equality is inconsistent with the special compact between the two founding peoples in Canada.

The *Citizens' Forum on Canada's Future* established in 1991 also reported some uneasiness about the Canadian public's attitude to multiculturalism policy:

> Overwhelmingly participants told us that reminding us of our different origins is less useful in building a unified country than emphasizing the things we have in common. ...While Canadians accept and value Canada's cultural diversity, they do not value many of the activities of the multicultural program of the federal government. These are seen as expensive and divisive in that they remind Canadians of their different origins rather than their shared symbols, society, society and future.

The criticism that the multiculturalism policy is promoting too much diversity at the expense of unity has been voiced increasingly in recent years. In his book *Selling Illusions: the*

Cult of Multiculturalism in Canada, Trinidad-born novelist Neil Bissoondath leads the charge against the government's multiculturalism policy. The book reiterates concern over the potential divisiveness inherent in government promotion of cultural diversity. In Bissoondath's opinion, the government's encouragement of ethnic differences leads immigrants to adopt a "psychology of separation" from the mainstream culture. Multiculturalism is blamed for isolating ethno-racial groups in distinct enclaves by fostering an inward-focused mentality that drives a wedge between Canadians of different ethnic backgrounds. He argues that unity and cohesion are being sacrificed for a philosophy that separates, intensifies misunderstanding and hostility, and pits one group against another in the competition for power and resources. Bissoondath argues that instead of "Canadianizing" newcomers into a binding social fabric, official multiculturalism encourages them to cling to their traditional culture and the ancestral homeland and to believe that *there* is more important than *here*. By encouraging ethnic and cultural groups to perpetuate their distinctiveness, the multiculturalism policy prevents them from being integrated into the mainstream society. Bissoondath recommends removing personal culture and ethnicity from the realm of public policy and returning it to individuals and families. In his view, multiculturalism programs and activities should concentrate on battling racism, establishing inclusion and funding community programs that sensitize children to each other and stress not the differences that divide them but the similarities that unite them. While he favours maintaining government funding for such programs, Bissoondath advocates the establishment of an autonomous agency responsible for their implementation, on the lines of the Canada Council in the arts sector.

D. Provincial Multiculturalism Policies

All provinces and several municipal governments have adopted some form of multiculturalism policy. At present, six of the ten provinces-- Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec and Nova Scotia-- have enacted some form of multiculturalism legislation. In four provinces-- Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec-- multiculturalism is implemented by an advisory council that reports to the Minister responsible for the Act. In Nova Scotia, the Act is implemented by both a Cabinet Committee on multiculturalism and advisory councils.

13

Saskatchewan was the first province to adopt legislation on multiculturalism. The *Saskatchewan Multiculturalism Act* was first passed in 1974 and amended in 1983. The Act defines multiculturalism as the right of different communities to preserve their distinct cultures and to share them with others. The Act established a Multicultural Council whose duties are: to advise the Minister on multicultural issues; evaluate government programs on multiculturalism; liaise with government departments with multicultural responsibilities; and to promote programs to preserve and promote multiculturalism in the province.

Manitoba adopted the *Manitoba Intercultural Council Act* in 1984. Under the Act, the Council's mandate is to advise the government, through the Minister responsible for ethnocultural matters in the province, on education, human rights, immigrant settlement, media and communication and cultural heritage. In the summer of 1992 the Manitoba legislature adopted a new provincial *Multiculturalism Act*, which states in its preamble that:

> Manitoba's multicultural society is not a collection of many separate
> societies, divided by language and culture, but is a single society
> united by shared laws, values, aspirations and responsibilities.

A Multiculturalism Secretariat was established under the direction and control of the minister and through which the minister administers and carries out the provisions of this Act. The Secretariat is to "identify, priorize and implement actions to contribute to the achievement of a successful multicultural society."

Alberta first adopted multiculturalism legislation in 1984 with the passage of the *Alberta Cultural Heritage Act*. The Act defined multiculturalism as a fundamental characteristic of Alberta society which confers economic as well as social and cultural benefits on all Albertans. It was replaced in 1990 by the *Alberta Multiculturalism Act*, whose main objectives are to encourage respect for and promote an awareness of the multicultural heritage of Alberta and to foster an environment in which all Albertans can participate and contribute to the cultural, social, economic and political life of their province. The Act established a Multiculturalism Commission to advise the government on policy and programs respecting multiculturalism, as well as a Multiculturalism Advisory Council to advise the Commission on policy matters. A Multicultural Fund was also set

14

up to finance programs and services related to its objectives and to provide grants to eligible persons and organizations.

As part of its efforts to streamline government programs and operations, the Conservative provincial administration introduced new legislation in the spring of 1996 which would merge the human rights and multiculturalism programs. Under the proposed *Human Rights and Citizenship Act*, the Alberta Human Rights Commission would continue under the name Alberta Human Rights and Citizenship Commission and would take over the duties of the former Multiculturalism Commission. Similarly, the Multiculturalism Fund would be continued as the Human Rights, Citizenship and Multiculturalism Fund.

Although Ontario inaugurated an official multicultural policy that promoted the cultural activities of the various ethnic groups in 1977, formal legislation establishing a Ministry of Citizenship and Culture dates from 1982. Under the Act, the Ministry is responsible for the promotion of multiculturalism within the province and is advised by a Multiculturalism Advisory Council. One of the chief objectives of the Ministry is to "stress full participation of all Ontarians as equal members of the community, encouraging the sharing of cultural heritage while affirming those elements held in common by all residents." In 1987, the Ontario government reaffirmed its policy of multiculturalism based on the following principles:

- an acknowledgement of diversity and promotion of knowledge, understanding, acceptance and celebration of this diversity;

- a commitment to ensuring that people of all cultures and races have equal access and participate as responsible citizens;

- a commitment to deliver public services attuned to cultural values and tradition.

Quebec designates its policy as "interculturalism." It is mainly concerned with the acceptance of, and communication and interaction between culturally diverse groups (cultural communities) without, however, implying any intrinsic equality among them. Diversity is tolerated and encouraged, but only from within a framework that establishes the unquestioned supremacy of French as a language and culture of Quebec.

In 1981, the Ministry of Cultural Communities and Integration set out its intercultural objectives by publishing a plan of action entitled *Autant de façons d'être Québécois* (Québécois. Each and Everyone). The plan talked about the development of a strategy to:

- Develop cultural communities and ensure maintenance of their uniqueness;

- Sensitize francophones to the contribution of cultural communities to Quebec's heritage and cultural development;

- Facilitate the integration of cultural communities into Quebec society, especially those sectors historically excluded or underrepresented within institutional settings.

In 1984, the National Assembly passed legislation creating the *Conseil des communautés culturelles et de l'immigration* (Council of Cultural Communities and of Immigration). The Council advises the Minister on the planning and implementation of government policies relating to cultural communities and immigration. It also commissions studies and undertakes research on relevant issues.

Quebec's intercultural orientation toward immigrants and diversity was further confirmed with the release at the end of 1990 of the White Paper ("Let's Build Quebec Together. A Policy Statement on Immigration and Integration"). Three principles were reinforced in the government's policy:

- Quebec is a French-speaking society;

- Quebec is a democratic society in which everyone is expected to contribute to public life;

- Quebec is a pluralistic society that respects the diversity of various cultures, from within a democratic framework.

To meet these obligations, the White Paper proposed a formal "moral contract" between immigrants and native-born Québécois. Quebec would declare itself a francophone, pluralistic society, yet one that is mindful of cultural differences. Immigrants would subscribe to Quebec's *Charter of Rights* and contribute to Quebec nation-building in cooperation with native-born Quebeckers.

Nova Scotia adopted its multiculturalism legislation in 1989. The *Act to Promote and Preserve Multiculturalism* recognizes multiculturalism as an inherent feature of Nova Scotia

16

society and pledges the government to the maintenance of good relations between cultural communities. The Act created two administrative structures to manage its implementation: a Cabinet Committee on Multiculturalism oversees the application of the policy on a government-wide basis and a Multicultural Advisory Committee advises the Cabinet committee and reviews the programs.

PARLIAMENTARY ACTION

A. Bill C-93 (*Canadian Multiculturalism Act*)

This bill, which provided a statutory framework to the existing policy, was adopted by Parliament in July 1988 and immediately given Royal Assent. Passage of this legislation has imbued the principle of racial and cultural equality with the force of the law.

The Act recognizes the need to increase minority participation in society by mainstreaming Canada's major institutions. Moreover, all government agencies, departments and Crown corporations--not just the ministry responsible for multiculturalism--are currently expected to provide leadership in advancing Canada's multicultural mix.

It is also noteworthy that the Act makes the government accountable to both Parliament and the public for ensuring compliance with its provisions by requiring annual reports. A multiculturalism secretariat was established to support the government in implementing improved delivery of government services in federal institutions.

B. Bill C-37 (*Canadian Heritage Languages Institute Act*)

This bill, introduced in the House in September 1989 and adopted by Parliament in January 1991, provided for the establishment of a Heritage Languages Institute in Edmonton, with the purpose of developing national standards for teacher training and curriculum content for ethnic minority languages classes in Canada.

The February 1992 Budget tabled by Finance Minister Don Mazankowski deferred the establishment of the Canadian Heritage Languages Institute until further notice.

C. Bill C-63 (*Canadian Race Relations Foundation Act*)

Introduced in the House in February 1990, this legislation was also adopted by Parliament in January 1991. It established a Race Relations Foundation in Toronto, with the purpose of helping to eliminate racism and racial discrimination through public education. **Funding for the establishment of the Foundation was, however, deferred by the federal government in the budgets tabled in subsequent years.**

At the end of October 1996, Secretary of State for Multiculturalism Hedy Fry announced the establishment of the Foundation with a one-time endowment of $24 million from the federal government.

D. Report of the Standing Committee on Multiculturalism and Citizenship, June 1993

The last report of the Standing Committee on Multiculturalism and Citizenship, entitled "*Study of the Implementation of the Canadian Multiculturalism Act in Federal Institutions,*" was released in June 1993.

Among its major recommendations were several suggesting means of strengthening the evaluation of progress in the application of the *Canadian Multiculturalism Act* by federal institutions. Other key recommendations identified specific measures whereby government departments and agencies could strengthen their commitment to the principles of the Act.

CHRONOLOGY

1948 - Canada adhered to the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights,* which applies to all human beings, regardless of sex, race, religion, culture or ideology.

1960 - Parliament passed the *Canadian Bill of Rights,* which prohibits discrimination for reasons of race, national original colour, religion or sex.

1967 - Racial discrimination provisions that had existed in Canadian immigration law since the early twentieth century were abolished.

18

1969 - The Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism released
Book Four, on the contribution of other ethnic groups to the
cultural enrichment of Canada.

1970 - Canada ratified the *International Convention of the Elimination of
All Forms of Racial Discrimination*, which had entered into force
in January 1969.

1971 - The federal government announced multiculturalism policy within
a bilingual framework.

1972 - First appointment of a (junior) Minister for Multiculturalism.

1973 - The Canadian Consultative Council on Multiculturalism (later
renamed the Canadian Multiculturalism Council) was established as
an advisory body to the Minister.

1974 - Saskatchewan was the first province to adopt legislation regarding
multiculturalism.

1977 - Parliament adopted the *Canadian Human Rights Act*, which
established the Canadian Human Rights Commission to monitor
and mediate disputes over human rights in Canada.

1982 - The *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* enshrined equality
rights in the Constitution and acknowledged our multicultural
heritage.

1984 - House of Commons Special Committee on Visible Minorities in
Canadian Society issued its *Equality Now!* report.

1985 - Establishment of House of Commons Standing Committee on
Multiculturalism.

1988 - Royal Assent was given on 21 July to the *Canadian
Multiculturalism Act* after Parliament had adopted the legislation
with all-party support.

1990 - Multiculturalism Canada tabled its first annual report on the
implementation of the *Canadian Multiculturalism Act* by the
Government of Canada.

1991 - Royal Assent was given on 17 January to the *Department of
Multiculturalism and Citizenship Act*.   On 21 April, the new

Department was officially established with Gerry Wiener appointed as the first full-time Minister.

1993 - The Liberal Government elected in October announced that Multiculturalism and Citizenship Canada would be split along its two main components: the multiculturalism programs would be merged with the Canadian Heritage Department established by the previous administration and the citizenship programs would be amalgamated with the newly established Department of Citizenship and Immigration.

December 1994 - The federal government announced that would not pay out any compensation to national ethnic groups to redress past indignities meted out by the Canadian government. This decision contrasted with the precedent set by the previous Conservative government which paid out millions of dollars in compensation to the families of Japanese Canadians interned during the Second World War.

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